MORTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Kyle L. Kirchmeier, Sheriff

For Immediate Release
November 18, 2016
Contact: Morton County PIO (701) 426-1587 or (701) 595-3596
Morton website: http://www.co.morton.nd.us/

Protestors erect unlawful structures; should seek appropriate winter shelter

Mandan, N.D. – Photographs from a protest camp north on US Army Corps of Engineers land north of the Cannonball River show that inhabitants are fortifying their encampment by constructing temporary and permanent structures without a permit.

Per a Sept. 16 release from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a Special Use Permit requested by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe to use Federal lands managed by the Corps near Lake Oahe would have required the Tribe to apply for additional permission for "activities identified in Title 36 such as construction, either temporary or permanent, of any structures within areas identified in the Special Use Permit."

The Corp encourages those who are using the area to be good stewards and help to protect the valuable resources.

In an *Associated Press* report on Oct. 1, Cody Hall, former spokesman for the Red Warrior protest camp is quoted saying the tribe is prepared to stay through the winter using heating stoves and warmer clothes but "there'll be no permanent structures built." Despite this sentiment, temporary and permanent structures are being constructed.

"Protestors at the camps are erecting unlawful structures in an attempt to fortify for the coming winter weather, but their actions are both illegal and likely insufficient to protect them from the elements," said Morton County Sheriff Kyle Kirchmeier. "We've seen that many of these protestors are not from North Dakota and may not be familiar with the harshness of our winters, and we urge them to leave the camps and seek appropriate shelter for their own health and safety."

As a public service, the North Dakota Department of Health has activated a low power radio transmitter that operates at 1620 AM. This radio frequency is currently transmitting public health, safety, and other information in the vicinity of the Dakota Access protest camps.

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County and State law enforcement officials continue to urge those within the protest camps to understand that North Dakota winters are harsh with sub-zero temperatures and dangerous wind chills. In addition, possible snow totals could impact emergency personnel's ability to access the camp and provide aid.

Attempts to manage the cold, such as the use of generators and alternative heat sources at the camp sites, also present a fire hazard and concern for the ill effects of carbon monoxide.

"The number one goal of all state and local officials here is the safety of all involved in this event, including the protestors," said North Dakota Department of Health's Chief of Emergency Preparedness & Response Tim Wiedrich, "Exposure to North Dakota's winter weather presents a very real risk of frostbite, hypothermia, and life-threatening conditions."

Winter temperatures can be deceiving and prolonged exposure to cold air can be deadly, particularly for infants and the elderly. Get to know the warning signs, symptoms and treatment for the conditions indicated below.

Frostbite—is the damage to body tissue caused by exposure to extreme cold. A wind chill of –20°F will cause frostbite in just 30 minutes. Symptoms of frostbite are a loss of feeling and a white or pale appearance in extremities, such as fingers, toes, ear lobes, or tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately! If you must wait for help, slowly rewarm the affected areas. However if the person is also showing signs of hypothermia, warm the body core before the extremities.

Hypothermia (Low Body Temperature)—is a condition brought on when the body temperature drops to less than 95°F. Hypothermia can cause long-term liver, kidney, or pancreas problems and even be deadly. Symptoms of hypothermia include uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, Disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness and apparent exhaustion. Take the person's temperature. If below 95°F, seek medical care immediately! If medical care is not available, begin warming the person slowly. Warm the body core first. Caution; warming the arms and legs first drives cold blood toward the heart and can lead to heart failure. Get the person into dry clothing, and wrap them in a warm blanket covering the head and neck. Do Not give the person alcohol, coffee, or any hot beverage or food. Warm broth is the first food to offer.

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